

ARROW MENTOR GETTING STARTED

The Beginning

Once you have had your exploratory meeting and agreed to press on, please set the dates for at least your next six meetings. Ideally you will meet within two weeks of the first residential. This bulletin gives some ideas on how to approach your first meeting after the exploratory meeting.

Shape of the Meeting

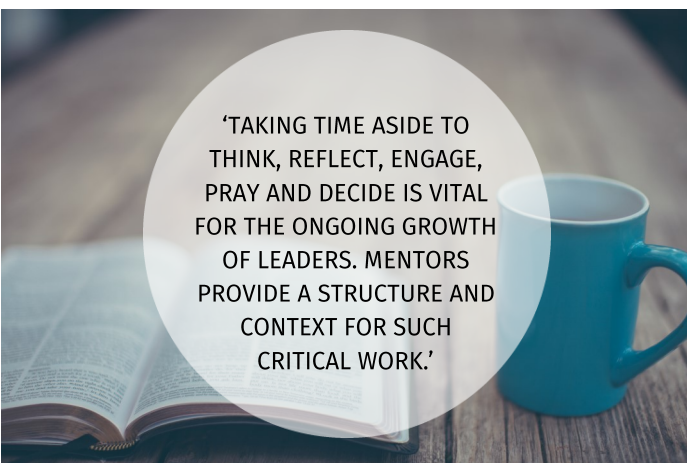
There are several things it would be good to cover:

- Building relationship.
- Agreeing expectations of the mentoring relationship.
- Reviewing how the first residential went.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

Creating a climate of trust is the first priority. This second meeting needs to continue the process of getting to know one another. Begin your time with one or two questions that help you in this process.

Trust and ease are developed over time, and also through discussing the expectations you both bring to it and establishing and agreeing the boundaries / ground rules within which you will work.



AGREEING EXPECTATIONS

This is a verbal agreement between you regarding how you will operate. Central to this is the issue of what you expect of one another. Most of the problems that occur in mentoring relationships are fuelled by unmet expectations. And most of these are because they are unspoken, so one person doesn't know the other has those expectations. The solution? Establish clear expectations at the start. Your participant should have sent you a few thoughts on this ahead of your meeting. You may like to use some or all of the following questions:

- What can I do to help you get the most out of our relationship?
- As we talk what do you consider to be important? How can I communicate with you most effectively?
- What characteristics are important for you to observe in me to develop a sense of trust?
- If a situation arose that generated tension or conflict between us, how do you prefer we resolve this? From your perspective, what do you consider to be the best steps to prevent this occurring?
- Are there any other ways of interacting with you that you consider would help us to effectively and fruitfully explore the issues raised?
- How would you prefer our sessions to be structured?

Be sure to clarify the following:

- **Commitment** Agree under what terms one of you can cancel a meeting. We suggest it is vital to have a high priority on these meetings in your diaries.
- **Communication** What communication will be appropriate before and after a meeting, and in between meetings? We suggest an email before the meeting to identify things that the participant would like to talk about, perhaps an email afterwards to summarise the action points from the mentor. Are you expecting to have any contact in between?
- **Time frame** How long will you meet for, and what is the best time to meet?

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- **Confidentiality** Agree how you will handle confidentiality. It is important for them to know they are in a safe place.
- **Challenge and affirmation** Talk about how the mentee receives challenge and affirmation best. Some will want things to be tackled gently and over time, others will see this as ‘pussy-footing around’, they want to be challenged directly and promptly. Some will receive affirmation best spoken at the time. Others receive it better written in an email afterwards. And talk about how the mentee will indicate whether the challenge and affirmation ratio is about right.
- **Evaluation** How will you evaluate the meeting? Our suggestion is at the end of each session it would be good to ask what worked well and what could be improved.

RESIDENTIAL 1

After the residential you will receive a summary of areas to discuss sheet (if you don’t, let us know). This gives you an overview of areas to discuss. If you would like fuller module overviews let me know.

The first residential mainly covers issues of character development and discerning God’s call. They will have been through two assessment procedures (a personality profile called 16PF5 which involves an hour with our residential psychologist, and a 360 review completed online). It would be good to see a copy of these before you meet, so ask them to send you one. These may have raised interesting issues and insights for them.

They are also asked to identify some developmental goals for the time between this residential and the next (using a Development Planner we sent you before the residential), as well as begin some work on a Personal Vision Statement.

We suggest you explore some broad things with the mentee at this stage, looking to identify some key themes to pick up on in the meetings that follow. Do ask about their personal development goals. Don’t feel you have to get too deep during this meeting, although don’t be surprised if you do!

- How was the residential?
- If they are married/have children, how did the family get on while you were away?
- How did you find the 16PF5 and Arrow 360 review?
- What were the insights you gained during the residential?
- What are the issues you feel you need to address?

- How realistic are your developmental goals? In what ways could they be sharpened?
- What would you find it helpful to explore in future meetings?

A Reminder

Mentors need to be good at listening and asking questions in order to help participants to gain insight and to apply those insights to their character, behaviour, life and ministry.

Sometimes it will be helpful for you to share your own experience or even to give advice – but do be wary of this, as it is easy to fall into the trap of giving our ideas at the expense of helping our mentees to access their own ideas. Try and get them to do most of the talking. It certainly isn’t the place for us to be the focus of attention.

WHAT IT ISN’T

Sometimes it helps to remind ourselves what mentoring on Arrow isn’t.

It is **not spiritual direction** as such, though there may be elements of this (and of course it depends how you see the role of spiritual direction). Arrow mentoring is specifically focused on the person’s work, leadership and character, and in particular their response to the programme, rather than their spiritual development as the sole focus.

It is **not friendship**, in the sense that it is not a reciprocal relationship. It is ‘two brains focusing on one person’s issues’. We hope it is friendly, but please don’t expect your mentee to be mentoring you as well.

It is **not counselling** or therapy, though you may be using similar skills... but if you find that each session is going over the same personal problems or areas of real distress, then maybe you need to think about enabling your mentee to find a dedicated counsellor to support them with that area.

In all of this do be yourself – half the fun of mentoring, as opposed to a professional therapeutic relationship, is that there is room for us to engage as ourselves. Do ask your mentee what they want. And keep asking how is this going, reviewing your relationship to make sure it’s meeting their needs.

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